

Soldier/Iraqi team gets 'beans & bullets' to the troops

By Lt. Col. Curtis A. Anderson Jr., Capt. Patricia M. Fitzgerald and Chief Warrant Officer John M. Burns, 501st Forward Support Battalion

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- In Baghdad, Iraq, American soldiers of the 501st Forward Support Battalion (FSB) and Iraqi civilians are working side by side completing missions that influence the readiness of every unit within the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

The 501st FSB's Supply Support Activity (SSA), is responsible for receiving, processing, issuing and storing parts for the brigade's fleet of vehicles and providing food and water to the BCT's soldiers.

The SSA's wartime mission differs vastly from its garrison mission because it has the monumental and critical task of providing the "beans and bullets" to the combat arms soldiers dispersed in various locations throughout Baghdad.

Because of the magnitude of the mission in theater, the command has hired 15 Iraqi employees to ease the soldiers' workload. These augmentees work in every section of the SSA: issuing, receiving, processing and storing parts. The help provided by the units Iraqi colleagues enables the SSA soldiers to deliver provisions and parts from the supplier(s) to the customers whenever and wherever needed.

Training the Iraqi employees can be compared to training a new supply Soldier. The section's noncommissioned officers explain to an interpreter how to perform a task and then he or she passes on the information to the employee.

For example, in the Receiving Section, the employees are taught how to identify an item and the documentation accompanying that item. He is taught how to validate the quantity and how to check for damage.

By tackling these tasks, the Iraqi employees assist Soldiers in expediting the supplies to the user and to the storage section. Once the supplies are processed, the items are placed into the customer issue bins or storage bins.

The battalion has a two person Iraqi team that accomplishes this mission and they have been taught how to conduct a Quality Assurance/Quality Control inspection for accuracy before placing the items into the bins.

Once the customer verifies that their parts are correct, employees help to complete the process by loading the customers' trucks with all the supplies.

There are also Iraqi employees working in the battalion's Storage Section to ensure that items are placed in the correct location to prevent loss or damage. They verify what needs to be stored before placing the item in its location and conduct an inventory of all items at that location before turning in the record to the storage section's NCOs.

The battalion has also hired two skilled Iraqi forklift drivers. They are the "parts movers." Not only do they load



A team of 501st Forward Support Battalion Supply Support Activity workmen prepares a pallet of used tires for shipment. Courtesy photo.

and unload the products, they also teach other workers how to operate the forklifts.

Like their Soldier counterparts, the forklift drivers care for their equipment daily and follow Army standards and procedures. They perform daily Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) to ensure the equipment is ready to perform when needed.

Working together, Soldiers and their Iraqi coworkers get the job done. During one recent week's work, they processed 4,819 Material Release Orders. In these transactions, 24,125 parts were issued to "Ready First Brigade" units and 4,255 parts were stored for future issue.

Upgrades are always needed in any business facility. In the SSA these improvements can range from building repairs and renovations to basic clean up.

Again, the battalion has hired local Iraqi carpenters, electricians and other craftsmen to repair concrete floors, rebuild and install doorways and lights. There is a crew of workers that handle these and other projects alongside FSB Soldiers to enhance the working environment for all.

At times language difficulties make communication difficult, but neither Soldiers nor the employees let that deter them from their common goal of completing the mission. Everyone finds a way to communicate.

The workers pay strict attention to detail of their jobs. They are the first to ask for clarification and assistance.

They take pride in their work.

NEWS...

Spain Mourns Bomb Victims on Election Eve

MADRID, Spain (AP) - Police hunted Saturday for three men seen clad in ski masks carrying backpacks toward trains that were bombed in Spain's worst terrorist attack, while grieving relatives began burying some of the 200 dead. Uncertainty about who carried out the bombings left Spaniards perplexed ahead of parliamentary elections Sunday. So far, autopsies of the dead show no evidence of suicide bombings, Spain's interior minister said, suggesting that Islamic terrorists who use such tactics might not have been involved.

U.S. Launches New Afghanistan Offensive

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - The U.S. military announced a sweeping new operation across troubled southern and eastern Afghanistan, with the aim of destroying al-Qaida and the Taliban and ultimately reeling in Osama bin Laden. The offensive comes as Americans step up their hunt for the al-Qaida leader and his top deputy, Ayman al-Zawahri, who are believed to be hiding out in the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Two U.S. GIs Die in Iraq Roadside Blast

TIKRIT, Iraq (AP) - A roadside bomb killed two American soldiers and wounded three Saturday, the first casualties suffered by an Army regiment taking over security in Saddam Hussein's hometown as part of a giant troop rotation. In Baghdad, the brother-in-law of a member of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council was killed when a bomb exploded in a shop Saturday, an official said.

Iran Freezes Nuclear Program Inspections

VIENNA, Austria (AP) - Iran froze international inspections of its nuclear facilities indefinitely Saturday, hours after the U.N. atomic agency issued a resolution censuring Tehran for hiding suspect activities. Despite the rhetoric and increased tensions, agency Director General Mohamed El Baradei appeared confident that his inspectors would soon be returning to Iran.

Thought for the day...

'Will to Live'

During WWII, Lt. Jim Flowers of the 712th Tank Battalion had his tank knocked out during action in France. He crawled out of his tank with one foot virtually torn off by the explosion.

Bandaged by a medic, he subsequently was left on the battlefield during the enemy counterattack. While lying in No Man's Land for two days, a large piece of steel from an artillery shell shattered his other foot. Flowers pulled off his belt and applied a tourniquet to his leg.

When eventually brought in by a litter team, he was not in shock but cheerful despite the damage to both of his feet. When asked how he survived, he replied with a smile, "Well, I just had the will to live."

And in other news...

Fifteen Robots Start \$1M Race in Mojave

By ANDREW BRIDGES Associated Press Writer

BARSTOW, Calif. (AP) -- The first of 15 driverless robots began trundling across the Mojave Desert on Saturday in an unprecedented race for \$1 million in government-funded prize money.

First out of the gate was Carnegie Mellon University's converted Humvee, which took off at a fast clip only to break down about 45 minutes into the race.

"That's not good. I assume that's the end of it," said Carnegie Mellon President Jared Cohon.

Virginia Tech's converted golf cart failed within 100 yards of the starting line when its brakes seized up. It was driven off the course by 23-year-old senior Nick Elder.

"Our vehicle knew where to go, but our brakes were holding us back," said a disappointed Elder.

A converted Jeep Grand Cherokee built by Axion Racing of Westlake Village also failed.

The Pentagon's research and development agency plans to award the money to the first team whose microcircuit-and-sensor-studded vehicle can cover the course in less than 10 hours, although those involved say it's unclear if any of the competitors would be able to claim the taxpayer-funded prize.

"I can't tell you today if the vehicles are going to go one mile or 201 miles," Tom Strat, deputy program manager for the race, said as scientists made last-minute adjustments to their robots Saturday morning.

Race organizers deployed eight to 10 tow trucks along the route in anticipation of breakdowns.

Of the 21 teams that attempted to qualify over four days of trials, just seven completed a flat, 1.36-mile obstacle course at the California Speedway in Fontana, east of Los Angeles.

Carnegie Mellon's Sandstorm had gotten off to a particularly impressive start before developing engine trouble.

"That's amazing. It's moving. It's moving. For a million dollars, I'd move too," said spectator Arturo Martinez.

Officials said the vehicles have to average 15 to 20 mph to finish in time.

"The tortoise will win this event. The rabbit will not win," said Col. Jose Negron, race program manager for DARPA, as the Pentagon agency is known.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is sponsoring the Grand Challenge to foster development of autonomous vehicles that could be used in combat. Defense officials foresee using the driverless, remote control-free robots to ferry supplies in war zones.

The agency spent \$13 million on the race. It estimates competitors laid out four to five times that amount developing their entries, which rely on global positioning satellites as well as a variety of sensors, lasers, radar and cameras to orient themselves and detect and avoid obstacles.

Cohon said his school's vehicle cost approximately \$3 million, which was contributed by dozens of corporate sponsors.

The on- and off-road course begins in Barstow and ends just across the California state line in Primm, Nev.

To ensure safety, the robots can pause during the race, stopping the 10-hour clock without penalty. That raises the possibility the competition could stretch into Sunday, officials said. A chase vehicle will tail each robot, with a judge ready to hit a kill switch if the robot goes astray.

"There are at least three or four who will have a very good chance of finishing the course; whether they finish it in 10 hours is another question," said DARPA director Tony Tether.

If no one finishes, the agency will host another contest, probably in 2006.

Today in History...

March 14, 1879: ALBERT EINSTEIN BORN

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) On March 14, 1879, Albert Einstein is born, the son of a Jewish electrical engineer in Ulm, Germany. Einstein's theories of special and general relativity drastically altered man's view of the universe, and his work in particle and energy theory helped make possible quantum mechanics and, ultimately, the atomic bomb.

After a childhood in Germany and Italy, Einstein studied physics and mathematics at the Federal Polytechnic Academy in Zürich, Switzerland. He became a Swiss citizen and in 1905 was awarded a Ph.D. from the University of Zürich while working at the Swiss patent office in Bern. That year, which historians of Einstein's career call the *annus mirabilis*--the "miracle year"--he published five theoretical papers that were to have a profound effect on the development of modern physics.

In the first of these, titled "On a Heuristic Viewpoint Concerning the Production and Transformation of Light," Einstein theorized that light is made up of individual quanta (photons) that demonstrate particle-like properties while collectively behaving like a wave. The hypothesis, an important step in the development of quantum theory, was arrived at through Einstein's examination of the photoelectric effect, a phenomenon in which some solids emit electrically charged particles when struck by light. This work would later earn him the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics.

In the second paper, he devised a new method of counting and determining the size of the atoms and molecules in a given space, and in the third he offered a mathematical explanation for the constant erratic movement of particles suspended in a fluid, known as Brownian motion. These two papers provided indisputable evidence of the existence of atoms, which at the time was still disputed by a few scientists.

Einstein's fourth groundbreaking scientific work of 1905 addressed what he termed his special theory of relativity. In special relativity, time and space are not absolute, but relative to the motion of the observer. Thus, two observers traveling at great speeds in regard to each other would not necessarily observe simultaneous events in time at the same moment, nor necessarily agree in their measurements of space. In Einstein's theory, the speed of light, which is the limiting speed of any body having mass, is constant in all frames of reference. In the fifth paper that year, an exploration of the mathematics of special relativity, Einstein announced that mass and energy were equivalent and could be calculated with an equation, $E=mc^2$.

Although the public was not quick to embrace his revolutionary science, Einstein was welcomed into the circle of Europe's most eminent physicists and given professorships in Zürich, Prague, and Berlin. In 1916, he published "The Foundation of the General Theory of Relativity," which proposed that gravity, as well as motion, can affect the intervals of time and of space. According to Einstein, gravitation is not a force, as Isaac Newton had argued, but a curved field in the space-time continuum, created by the presence of mass.

An object of very large gravitational mass, such as the sun, would therefore appear to warp space and time around it, which could be demonstrated by observing starlight as it skirted the sun on its way to earth. In 1919, astronomers studying a solar eclipse verified predictions Einstein made in the general theory of relativity, and he became an overnight celebrity. Later, other predictions of general relativity, such as a shift in the orbit of the planet Mercury and the probable existence of black holes, were confirmed by scientists.

During the next decade, Einstein made continued contributions to quantum theory and began work on a unified field theory, which he hoped would encompass quantum mechanics and his own relativity theory as a grand explanation of the workings of the universe. As a world-renowned public figure, he became increasingly political, taking up the cause of Zionism and speaking out against militarism and rearmament. In his native Germany, this made him an unpopular figure, and after Nazi leader Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany in 1933 Einstein renounced his German citizenship and left the country.

He later settled in the United States, where he accepted a post at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. He would remain there for the rest of his life, working on his unified field theory and relaxing by sailing on a local lake or playing his violin. He became an American citizen in 1940.

In 1939, despite his lifelong pacifist beliefs, he agreed to write to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on behalf of a group of scientists who were concerned with American inaction in the field of atomic-weapons research. Like the other scientists, he feared sole German possession of such a weapon. He played no role, however, in the subsequent Manhattan Project and later deplored the use of atomic bombs against Japan. After the war, he called for the establishment of a world government that would control nuclear technology and prevent future armed conflict.

In 1950, he published his unified field theory, which was quietly criticized as a failure. A unified explanation of gravitation, subatomic phenomena, and electromagnetism remains elusive today. Albert Einstein, one of the most creative minds in human history, died in Princeton in 1955.

The Old Ironsides Report

March 14, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2004				As of: Saturday, March 13, 2004 9:18:15 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP SEMIFINALS	THE DIVISION (TVPG): - OBSESSIONS	CELEBRATION OF VICTORY - COMMUNION MEDITATION	FOX NEWS LIVE	00:00
00:30				CORAL RIDGE HOUR - GOD AND THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION		00:30
01:00			THE WEDDING PLANNER	CHRISTOPHER CLOSEUP - ACT NATURAL	FOX NEWS LIVE	01:00
01:30				ARMY NEWSWATCH		01:30
02:00	ESPNEWS	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - PAC-10 CHAMPIONSHIP		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ATLANTIC 10 CHAMPIONSHIP	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30	NASCAR CRAFTSMAN TRUCK SERIES - EASYCARE VEHICLE SERVICE CONTRACTS 200				MCLAUGHLIN GROUP	02:30
03:00			SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON (TVG): - LOOKS LIKE STORMY WEATHER		CAPITAL GANG	03:00
03:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - A MESSAGE OF FORGIVENESS			03:30
04:00		SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (03'-04') (TV14): - COLIN FIRTH/NORAH JONES	MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG EAST CHAMPIONSHIP	WASHINGTON WEEK IN REVIEW	04:00
04:30	ESPNEWS		REAL VIDEOS (TVG): - SPIRITUAL WARFARE		HEADLINE NEWS	04:30
05:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII CHAMPIONSHIP SEMIFINALS		THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - THE DAD WHO KNEW TOO LITTLE		PEOPLE IN THE NEWS	05:00
05:30		LIVE IN HOLLYWOOD (TVPG):	MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE (TVPG):			05:30
06:00			EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND (TVPG): - OLDER WOMEN	WISHBONE (TVY): - THE CANINE CURE	CNN SATURDAY NIGHT	06:00
06:30		AMERICAN ATHLETE (TVPG):	THE KING OF QUEENS (TVPG): - DEACON BLUES	SESAME STREET SPECIALS (TVY): - THE GREAT NUMBERS GAME		06:30
07:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII CHAMPIONSHIP SEMIFINALS	HEADLINE NEWS	AMERICAN DREAMS (TVPG): - HIGH HOPES	LUCK OF THE IRISH	DATeline INTERNATIONAL	07:00
07:30		HOOR OF POWER - FAITHFULLY GIVEN TO GIVE FAITHFULLY				07:30
08:00		CELEBRATION OF VICTORY - COMMUNION MEDITATION	AMERICAN IDOL (TVG):		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:30		CORAL RIDGE HOUR - GOD AND THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION		SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TVY): - TEXAS / WALKING SMALL		08:30
09:00	ESPNEWS	CHRISTOPHER CLOSEUP - ACT NATURAL		MOTORWEEK	AT LARGE WITH GERALDO RIVERA	09:00
09:30	HORSE RACING - THE FLORIDA DERBY	CAFE VIDEO - IN, NOT OF	AMERICAN IDOL (TVG):	EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES (TVPG):		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	WISHBONE (TVY): - THE CANINE CURE		WWE SMACKDOWN! (TV14):	BELTWAY BOYS	10:00
10:30		SESAME STREET SPECIALS (TVY): - THE GREAT NUMBERS GAME	THE TWILIGHT ZONE (TVPG): - THE MIND AND THE MATTER		FOX NEWS WATCH	10:30
11:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - WAC CHAMPIONSHIP	LUCK OF THE IRISH	SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON (TVG): - LOOKS LIKE STORMY WEATHER	STARGATE SG-1 (TVPG): - NIGHTWALKERS	HEADLINE NEWS	11:00
11:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - A MESSAGE OF FORGIVENESS		AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM	11:30
12:00			MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	HEADLINE NEWS	THE CHRIS MATTHEWS SHOW	12:00
12:30		SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (TVY): - TEXAS / WALKING SMALL	REAL VIDEOS (TVG): - SPIRITUAL WARFARE	ESPNEWS	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	12:30
13:00	SPORTSCENTER	MOTORWEEK	THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - THE DAD WHO KNEW TOO LITTLE	JUDGING AMY (TVPG): - YE OLDE FREEDOM INN	BIG STORY WEEKEND EDITION	13:00
13:30		EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES (TVPG):	MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE (TVPG):			13:30
14:00	NHL - DALLAS STARS @ DETROIT RED WINGS	HEADLINE NEWS	EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND (TVPG): - OLDER WOMEN	ERIN BROCKOVICH	CNN PRESENTS	14:00
14:30		ARMY NEWSWATCH	THE KING OF QUEENS (TVPG): - DEACON BLUES			14:30
15:00		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - MWC CHAMPIONSHIP	AMERICAN DREAMS (TVPG): - HIGH HOPES		FOX & FRIENDS	15:00
16:00			AMERICAN IDOL (TVG):		FOX & FRIENDS	16:00
16:15				HEADLINE NEWS		16:15
16:30				SEINFELD (TV14): - THE HANDICAP SPOT		16:30
17:00	TRACK & FIELD - IAAF INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS	SPORTSCENTER		MEET THE PRESS	CBS NEWS SUNDAY MORNING	17:00
17:30			AMERICAN IDOL (TVG):			17:30
18:00	THE SPORTS REPORTERS	WWE RAW! (TV14):		AMERICA'S BLACK FORUM		18:00
18:30	SPORTSCENTER		THE TWILIGHT ZONE (TVPG): - THE MIND AND THE MATTER	ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT (TVPG):	FACE THE NATION	18:30
19:00		STARGATE SG-1 (TVPG): - NIGHTWALKERS	SWAMP CRITTERS OF THE LOST LAGOON (TVG): - LOOKS LIKE STORMY WEATHER		HEADLINE NEWS	19:00
19:30			HARVEST WITH GREG LAURIE - A MESSAGE OF FORGIVENESS	ESPNEWS	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	19:30
20:00		ROAD TO THE FINAL FOUR	MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	SPORTSCENTER	LATE EDITION W/ WOLF BLITZER	20:00
20:30			REAL VIDEOS (TVG): - SPIRITUAL WARFARE			20:30
21:00	NASCAR NEXTEL CUP SERIES - GOLDEN CORRAL 500	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - SEC CHAMPIONSHIP	THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - THE DAD WHO KNEW TOO LITTLE	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC CHAMPIONSHIP		21:00
21:30			MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE (TVPG):			21:30
22:00			EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND (TVPG): - OLDER WOMEN		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
22:30			THE KING OF QUEENS (TVPG): - DEACON BLUES			22:30
23:00			AMERICAN DREAMS (TVPG): - HIGH HOPES	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII CHAMPIONSHIP	FOX NEWS LIVE	23:00
23:30		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN				23:30